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REPORT

OF

MR. J. J. TILLEY

EX-INSPECTOR OF MODEL SCHOOLS

RELATIVE TO THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND OTHER MATTERS

PRINTED BY ORDER OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO



TORONTO:

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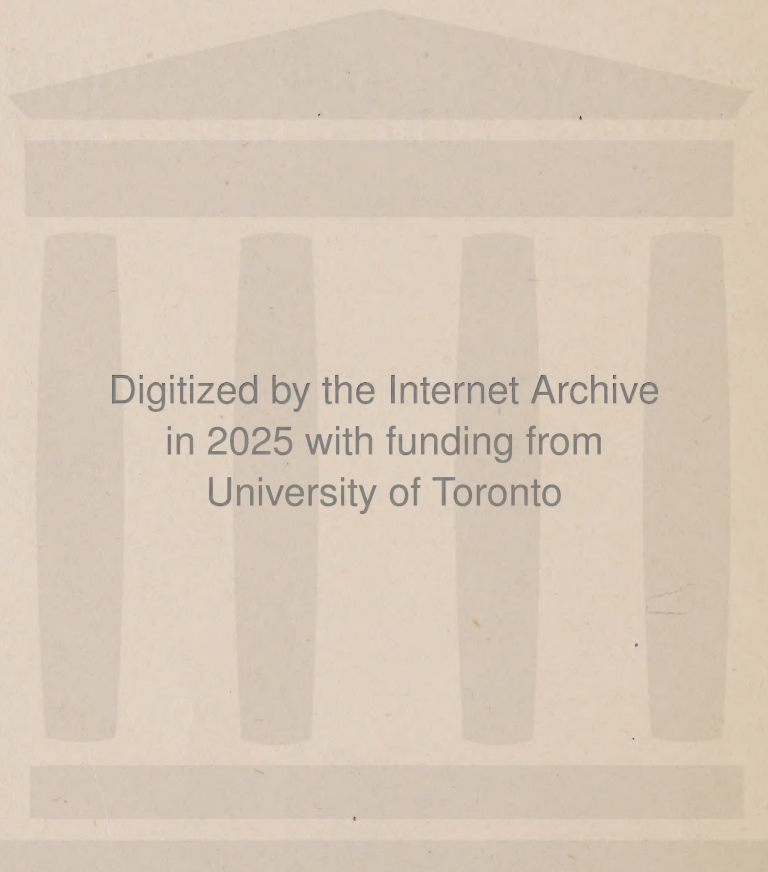
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TORONTO, December 17th, 1913.

Dear Sir,—I wish to avail myself of your long experience in connection with the training of teachers by asking you to report upon the whole question of Model Schools. I will also ask you to offer such criticisms and suggestions in connection with these schools and cognate questions, as you may deem to be in the interests of education.

Yours truly,

R. A. PYNE.

Minister of Education.

J. J. TILLEY, Esq.,

Ex-Inspector of Model Schools.

REPORT OF MR. J. J. TILLEY

To the Hon. Dr. Pyne, Minister of Education, Toronto:

Sir,—In accordance with your direction, I beg to submit the following report:

Model Schools

The Model School system has been thirty-seven years in existence and may lay claim to the possession of an historical perspective. An outline of the changes made since it was established may not be uninteresting. As Second and Third Class certificates were so closely associated during a part of this period, I shall speak of both in this outline.

Granting Certificates

Previous to 1871, all Provincial Public School certificates were obtained from the Toronto Normal School, and these were of two grades—First and Second. All other certificates were limited to the counties in which they were obtained and were given by what afterwards came to be known as “Old County Boards,” upon examinations conducted entirely by these boards.

In 1871 the “Old County Boards” were discontinued and “New County Boards” were established. The latter boards consisted of one or more Public School Inspectors, who were appointed in that year, and two or more examiners with prescribed qualifications. To these boards was given the issuing of Second and Third Class certificates upon questions prepared by the Education Department and in accordance with a prescribed standard. The Second Class certificates granted by these boards were permanent and provincial, but the Third Class certificates were limited to the county or district in which they were given and were valid for only three years.

Intermediate Examination

The first provincial examination conducted entirely by the Department was held in 1876 and was known as the “Intermediate Examination.” The primary purpose of this examination was to test the work done in High Schools and to serve as a basis for what was called “Payment by Results,” but the certificates obtained at this examination were soon given the rank of Second Class. It should be stated in this connection that the Normal Schools were still granting First Class and Second Class certificates with both professional and non-professional courses of study.

Important Changes in 1877

In 1877 very important changes were made in the issuing of certificates. The reading of the non-professional answers for Second Class certificates was conducted by a Provincial Board of Sub-examiners appointed by the Department, and the training in the Normal Schools was then made entirely professional and was restricted to Second Class teachers. There were in these schools three terms during the year, instead of two, as formerly. This change in the length of the term continued until 1884, when the half-yearly term was restored. This change remained in force until 1903, when the term was extended to a school year. The final examination of the Normal School students was conducted by examiners appointed by the Minister of Education, and upon their report to him Second Class certificates were issued. This practice was continued, with some modifications, until the new Normal Schools were established in 1908.

Model Schools Established

In the same year (1877) the Model School System was established for the professional training of Third Class teachers, and the granting of certificates was left with County Boards. These certificates were, at first, valid only in the county in which they were given and were limited to three years; but in 1881 they were made provincial, and County Boards were given permission to renew them for a further period of three years, and some were made permanent. Third Class certificates came in this way to have almost as much value as those of the Second Class, and this reducing of the difference between these grades was carried still further soon after, when the literary test for Second Class certificates was adopted as the standard for the Third Class.

Placing the Normal Schools upon a professional basis and requiring all young teachers to attend County Model Schools for professional training was the first step taken by the province to require all teachers to have some professional training before being licensed to teach. The Model School term, which was at first limited to eight weeks, was soon extended to eleven weeks, and subsequently to fifteen weeks. After passing through a Model School and teaching at least one year and after passing the non-professional examination for Second Class, the teacher could then attend a Normal School and obtain a Second Class Provincial certificate. The establishing of the Model School system for the initial training of all young teachers and the granting of Third Class certificates formed a simple and inexpensive plan of providing some training for all teachers.

Tentative Measure

It was expected, however, that this would be but a tentative measure, not a permanent one. It was thought that the young teacher having taught a few years would not be satisfied with his limited certificate, but would go forward to a Normal School and obtain a permanent certificate, valid throughout the province. It was also thought that the increased salaries for Second Class teachers, and requiring the same non-professional standard for admission to both Normal and Model Schools would do much to further this desirable end. I need not say the results were sadly disappointing.

Over-Supply of Teachers

The removal of the limits which had been placed upon Third Class certificates as to time and area of validity and the ease with which these certificates could be obtained, soon flooded the country with Third Class teachers and caused such an underbidding of salaries that there was no encouragement for teachers to incur the expense necessary to obtain a permanent certificate.

Statistics extending over a number of years showed that only one-fourth of the teachers who had gone through Model Schools went forward to the Normal Schools, and the result was seventy-five per cent. of all who had obtained Third Class certificates received no further professional training. It was also found in practice that the salaries paid to Second Class teachers were but little above the salaries paid to Third Class teachers. Teachers of the lowest grade became so plentiful that the supply was quite in excess of the demand, and to obtain schools they were at the mercy of those who employed them, and were obliged to take almost any salary offered, however small it might be.

It is needless to say that trustees in a large majority of cases took advantage of the conditions, and salaries were reduced to a minimum. The result was, as I have said, that very few teachers incurred the expense necessary to obtain permanent

certificates; and of the large number who obtained Third Class certificates, very few intended to remain as teachers. They expected to use teaching as a stepping-stone, and after teaching a few years to retire at the first opportunity for bettering their position. This was especially true of young men, who either avoided the profession or retired from it in such numbers that rural schools were taught mainly by young women.

Majority of Women Teachers

In 1907—the year in which County Model Schools were discontinued—the female teachers in rural schools out-numbered the male teachers by more than four to one, and this disparity has continued to the present time.

Effect of Longer Normal Term

Extending the Normal School term in 1903 to a school year only added to the difficulty by increasing the cost of obtaining a Second Class certificate. The result was the attendance at the Normal Schools was so reduced that in 1904 the Minister of Education was obliged to remove the restriction of one year's teaching before being admitted to a Normal School.

The students having passed the non-professional examination could at once attend either a Model or a Normal School. This modification of the regulations had, however, but little effect upon the attendance at the Normal Schools.

Number of Second and Third Class Teachers

The number of Second Class teachers in rural schools continued to decrease, while those of the Third Class continued to increase. In 1908, after the last class of County Model School teachers had been engaged, we find the following conditions existed:

(1) Out of the 5,696 teachers employed in rural schools, only twenty-six per cent. had Second Class certificates, while the teachers with Third Class certificates numbered nearly seventy-three per cent.

(2) That seventy-five per cent. of all Third Class teachers received no other training than that given in County Model Schools.

(3) That the average age of such teachers was not nineteen years.

(4) That a large majority of those teachers did not teach more than three or four years.

Under such conditions, it need occasion no surprise that the opinion obtained among many that our rural schools were not keeping step with the general progress in the country, but were rather marking time, if not falling behind.

Changed Conditions Necessary

In looking back over the many years that are past it may cause some surprise that such a condition of affairs should have been allowed to go on from year to year without any decided effort being made to improve the status or remuneration of the teacher and thereby to raise the standard of the schools.

It must be remembered, however, that the Model School system was a simple and inexpensive means for providing some professional training for all teachers, and

that through furnishing cheap teachers it enjoyed a wide popularity. To make the radical change necessary, was to call forth strong opposition and to require much courage. No reflection can be cast upon the principals of the Model Schools. It was the system that was at fault, not those to whom it was entrusted. I know from a long experience that the Model School masters discharged their onerous duties in a most faithful and efficient manner. They knew full well that the length of the term was quite too limited to enable them to produce satisfactory results, and this opinion was expressed by them at different times by resolution.

The same opinion was also voiced by the teachers themselves, by Public School Inspectors and by Trustees at Provincial Conventions. In several of my annual reports I also urged the necessity of extending the term.

Payment of Government Grants

Up to 1907, the Government grants to rural schools were based solely on the average attendance, and no recognition had been taken of the teacher's salary or of his certificate. A small school taught by a First or Second Class teacher, to whom a liberal salary was paid, would receive less government grant than a larger school taught by a low-priced Third Class teacher. This was now changed. The certificate held by the teacher and the salary paid, became important factors in determining the amount of grant payable to the school. Special grants were also paid for the employment of First or Second Class teachers, but no such grant was paid to schools employing Third Class teachers. The character of the school house, the condition of school premises, and the supply of school requisites, also became elements in determining the amount of Government grants. This change in the payment of grants had a most beneficial effect in increasing teachers' salaries and in securing better kept school premises. It should be mentioned in this connection that the total Government grants to rural schools were increased by more than 300 per cent.

District Model Schools Established

In the year 1908, a small number of District Model Schools were opened for the purpose of providing a lower grade of teachers for sections which, from a low assessed valuation or from other causes, might be unable to secure Second Class teachers. The term extends over a period of seventeen weeks and the certificates obtained are valid for five years. These certificates are known as Limited Thirds, and do not permit the holders of them to engage with any school at will. An engagement between the trustees and a teacher holding this grade of certificate must first be approved by the inspector, who knows the conditions of the section. This engagement, if made at the end of a calendar year, can be made only for six months, and if continued, it must be subject to the same conditions as those under which it was first made.

Number of District Model Schools

When the District Model Schools were opened there was no basis on which to form an accurate estimate of what the attendance would be, and Boards of Trustees of schools selected as Model Schools were notified that the arrangements made might be only temporary. Six schools were selected and during the first three years of their existence the aggregate attendance per year was only 248, or 41 students for each school. In 1911 and 1912 the number of schools was increased to thirteen, but the total attendance was only 450 per year, or 34 per school. With this experience of five years, it was concluded that ten schools with ten divisions at least in

each school would furnish the necessary requirements for the training of the students who might be expected to attend. Ten schools were selected in central districts and the attendance which, as I have said, was 450 in 1912, fell to 365.

Past experience showed that forty students could be trained in a school with ten divisions without unduly disturbing the regular work of the school, as only four students would be assigned to a class.

Conditions of District Model Schools

The selection of the Model Schools in 1913 was made, with one exception, upon these conditions, as to number of divisions, and no exception should be made in the case of any school.

The new Model Schools are now upon a better basis than were the County Model Schools. The salaries of the principals have been so increased by Government grants that trustees should be able to secure and retain the best talent available, and the services of the assistants in the training have been recognized for the first time, a special annual grant of \$50 being now made to each assistant. The term has also been extended by two weeks and begins on the 18th of August. The principal can thus become acquainted with his students and get his work outlined and fairly under way before he is called upon to give any attention to the Public School. All the masters speak very highly of this new plan.

In closing this part of my report, it may be stated that of the 365 students in attendance at the Model Schools, no less than 258 or seventy per cent. had what is known as "Normal Entrance" standing; that is, their non-professional standing would have entitled them to go at once to a Normal School had they so desired, and only 64 students or seventeen per cent. entered through the Model School Entrance Examination. The continuance of this examination seems scarcely necessary.

Outlook for Model Schools

It may be asked what is the outlook for Third Class certificates and for Model Schools. During the past five years the number of teachers with Third Class or District certificates in rural schools has been reduced from 3,499 to 1,491, while the number with Second Class certificates has increased from 1,482 to 2,784. During the past six years, that is since the new Normal Schools were opened, the total average attendance in the Normal Schools has been 1,116, of whom a large majority, doubtless, obtained Second Class certificates. The employment of so many teachers yearly with permanent certificates will naturally do much to lengthen their term of service in the schools, and will thereby reduce the demand for new teachers. That this effect will follow is already shown by the yearly decrease in the number of schools employing teachers with temporary certificates. The supply of teachers with permanent certificates may, after a time, so closely approach the demand that Third Class certificates may be at a discount; and the holders of these certificates may experience considerable difficulty in obtaining schools through the competition of Second Class teachers. Should that time come, the result will be that more students will go to the Normal Schools and some Model Schools may be closed. I think, however, this will not be likely to happen for several years.

Cause of Scarcity of Teachers

I know the idea obtained very generally in the country and probably the same opinion is still held by many, that the closing of County Model Schools was responsible for the scarcity of teachers. Although this contention was true for a time, the facts now show that it is no longer correct. During the last five years of the

existence of County Model Schools, the total number of certificates issued by the Department, including First, Second, Third and District certificates, was 8,366, an average of 1,673 per year. During the year just closed the total number of such certificates issued, not including High School Certificates, was 2,087—an increase of 414 over the average during the Model School period.

The shortage in the supply of teachers during the past few years has been caused by the emigration of teachers to the Northwest Provinces, by the unusual expansion of business, which has offered to young people more inviting fields of labour than the school room, and by the opening of large areas in New Ontario, which are constantly requiring more teachers for their new schools. The large growth of urban centres also demands many additional teachers, and thus reduces the supply for rural schools.

Salaries

Teachers' salaries, which a few years ago were very small, have been increased considerably during the past five years. The average salary paid to male teachers in 1908 in rural schools, including the unorganized districts, was \$458, and to females \$379. In 1912 the figures were respectively \$536 and \$464. This is a decided improvement, but the outlook as yet is not very encouraging for securing a supply of good male teachers for rural schools.

Qualifications of Teachers

It should not be necessary to argue in favour of providing the best qualified teachers for our schools, and yet there are those who take an opposite view. An engine may be properly constructed and equipped, but the skilful engineer is required to secure the best results from its working. So it is with the school. We may organize a good school system, we may build good school houses, may supply them properly with all school requisites, and may send children regularly to school and then we must commit the whole matter into the hands of the teacher. It has been well said, "As is the teacher, so is the school." Water will not rise above the fountain whence it issues, nor will the school rise above the level of the teacher. He is mainly responsible for the success or failure of the educational system.

The requirements of the present time demand much more than the book knowledge necessary to obtain a certificate. Behind the certificate there must be the teacher and behind the teacher there must be the man with developed character. Without this we need expect nothing more than what are commonly known as the School Arts.

What satisfied the conditions twenty-five years ago will not do for to-day. As civilization becomes more and more complex, each succeeding generation requires that the training provided for its youth shall be modernized to enable them to achieve success in the ever increasing competition of life.

A Prominent Farmer's Opinion

At a recent meeting of the Dominion Grange, Mr. E. C. Drury showed his proper appreciation of the situation when he said: "I do not think there is the slightest need to say that the qualifications demanded for teachers are too high. We want teachers possessing a little reserve force who can bring to their work a real uplift." He was of the opinion that "until men were paid a living wage, they could not be expected to remain permanently in the teaching profession." He also said he "had given a labouring man as much as a teacher receives."

Advantages of Normal Schools

The advantages afforded by Normal Schools for the training of teachers are so apparent that but little need be said of them. These schools are taught by staffs of experienced and highly qualified teachers, and specialists are provided whenever necessary. The term extends over a school year, which enables the teachers to supplement the students' academic knowledge, and to review the various subjects of the Public School curriculum from the teacher's standpoint. It also enables the teachers to become better acquainted with the needs of the students and to inspire them with higher ideals.

The mutual intercourse among large numbers of students will naturally arouse ambition and send them out with a broader conception of their profession than could possibly be developed in small training schools. But the great advantage of these schools is that they are furnished with specialists and all the necessary equipment for instruction in what may be called the new subjects of education, viz., Nature Study or Elementary Agriculture, Manual Training and Household Science.

It is often said that knowledge is power, but this can be true only when the development in the individual comes from the consciousness of his own awakened powers. This then becomes inspiration and is the underlying principle of these "new" subjects. The purpose is not so much the abstract study of books as of concrete realities—of things to be done—and the great object is to give a vocational value to the pupil's education.

Agriculture

To say that Agriculture is an important subject for rural schools, is only to utter a truism. Agriculture is the foundational industry of Ontario, and the farmer has a right to expect that his children shall be taught, not only the studies that make for general intelligence, but also those subjects which tend to awaken and retain the boy's interest in farm life, and which help to make him a skilled agriculturist.

The time was when it was thought that muscle was all that was needed to make a good farmer, but changes in economic conditions have fully shown that farming, to be profitable, requires brain as well as muscle. The teaching of agriculture makes the instruction of the child more natural, since it uses the child's daily experience as the basis for his teaching. It is the one object that touches every side of the home life of rural pupils and brings the life and interests of the school more closely into touch with the home life of the pupils and with the employment in which most of them will be engaged after they leave school. It develops habits of industry, respect for labour, a love for productive work, and cultivates a spirit of independent investigation.

The object is not to teach practical farming in the school room, but to lead the child to cultivate habits of careful observation and to draw useful lessons from what he observes. The various facts in physical geography found in the home surroundings; the different kinds of plant food and the sources from which obtained; the germination and diffusion of seeds; the respective values of the different kinds of soils; the ravages of insect pests; the economic value of birds in preventing the undue increase of insects, in devouring small rodents, in destroying the seeds of harmful plants, and in acting as general scavengers; all these and hundreds more will furnish useful lessons for those who are expected to spend their lives on the farm.

But perhaps the greatest benefit which will result from the teaching of this subject will be that it will lead to a demand for higher agricultural education and cause the boy to be more contented on the farm.

Manual Training

Some of the uses of Manual Training may be mentioned briefly. It trains the eye to accurate observation, and the hand to skilful execution; it cultivates forethought in planning a piece of work; it develops the creative faculty; stimulates imagination, and encourages originality; it promotes concentration, persistence and self-reliance in carrying work on to its proper completion and awakens ambition in many pupils when the interest in other studies fails. Perhaps its chief value is in providing a sound basis for subsequent technical education.

There are now 72 Manual Training centres in active operation in the province and the number has been doubled during the past six years. There is also a growing number of schools in which elementary constructive work in clay, cardboard, paper and thin wood is being carried on by teachers in the lower grades and the unanimous opinion of the teachers is that such work is helpful to the other subjects taught in the schools.

The Department has issued recently an excellent Manual on this subject, which gives all the help needed by an inexperienced teacher, and an initial grant of \$50 with a subsequent annual grant of \$30 is given to any village or rural school which takes up this subject.

The value of Manual Training as a preparatory step in developing the skilled workman who will subsequently go forth from the technical institute is fully appreciated by all progressive countries. The age in which we live is essentially industrial, and it is seen on every hand that in the long run the most highly trained labour must win in industrial competition. The greatest industrial and commercial success has come to the nations best equipped to earn it.

Canada is rich beyond the conception of most people in those natural resources, out of which a great agricultural, manufacturing and commercial country is to be built up. Proper development of these resources cannot be accomplished by unskilled labour. The prosperity of our country is dependent largely upon the industrial efficiency of the farmer, the mechanic and the miner. The highest degree of industrial efficiency can be secured only through sound technical instruction, based upon that general intelligence and character which it is the function of the home and of the school to ensure.

Household Science

There is another side to the problem of industrial education which should be considered. It is that which concerns the education of the girl who sooner or later will assume the responsibilities which will come to her as wife and mother in the home. The home has been called the unit of society, and we cannot provide properly for its requirements by considering the boy and the man alone. The girl and the woman must be taken into account in the training, for there can come to no human being greater responsibilities than those which come to woman in the home. If young men should be trained in technical schools to understand industrial conditions, surely young women should be trained to deal wisely with the problems which will meet them in after life.

We deem it vitally important that teachers shall have special training to fit them for their work, that they shall study the child and the manner of its unfolding in order that their instruction may be adapted to its needs. Is it of less importance that the mother, rearing her own child, shall have had some training to prepare her for the seriousness of the problems which will meet her in the home life?

Much money is spent in experiments to determine the proper ration and kinds of food for the lower orders of animals on the farm, because such special knowledge

is necessary for the farmer who would succeed in raising stock. Equally important is it that the mother should know how to select, prepare, cook and serve to her family the most suitable, nourishing and economic kinds of food, so that the smallest income may best be made to meet the needs of large families.

It should be said in this connection that the purpose of this training is not confined to cooking or to the kitchen. It deals with sanitation, lighting, heating, ventilating and beautifying the home, and aims to show how the latest results of scientific research may contribute to greater economy in the home, to the better care of health, and to longer life. In short it aims so to instruct the girls of our country that they may become thoughtful, intelligent, thrifty housewives, and not merely the victims of hard drudgery, as is too often the case.

Consolidated Schools

The old type of rural schools with a single teacher for all grades, with meagre equipment, and with a crowded programme, cannot measure up to present day requirements. The venerated rural school of our forefathers is now out of the running. The area of the school unit should be so enlarged as to provide a sufficient number of children to maintain a well organized graded school under the leadership of men specially fitted for the work, and an assessed valuation adequate for its support. The little one-room, one-teacher rural school with its limited attendance has served its day and generation and its memory should be revered. But it belongs to the past, not to the present.

There was a time which many can remember when the country school was a centre of attraction, when spelling contests between adjoining sections, literary societies and debating clubs, made it the life of the neighbourhood. It was then suited to the social needs of its generation, but owing to industrial and social changes, city immigration, and other causes, that time has passed away, never to return. The old order of things is gone, and the good old rural school with its average attendance of from 40 to 50 pupils, taught by a man with a well developed character, has given place to the small school of from 5 to 20 pupils in charge of a young girl who, in a majority of cases, will teach but a few years.

Many parents are not satisfied with the limited opportunities now afforded in rural schools and are determined to provide a higher education for their children. To do this they must either send them from home or move to a town or city. The result is that a large number, perhaps the majority of those thus sent to obtain a higher education, never return to live again the farm life. If this emigration for higher education is to continue, the rural districts will be reduced in population and will lose much of their best blood.

It has been well said that "The country child is entitled to as good educational privileges as the city child, and this too without breaking up the family home." It might also be said experience has shown that under equal advantages, he will excel his city cousin.

The question of improved education for rural children is the greatest question which can come before the farmer to-day. What is especially needed is a system of schools that educates country people as successfully as city schools educate city people—a system that trains for life without breaking up the home or taking the child away from the influence of the favourable conditions under which he was born.

Consolidated schools furnish at once the most feasible plan for accomplishing this. Country schools capable of doing it, cannot be established within walking distance of each other. Transportation must be provided. The introduction of the system is sure to come. The chief concern is the kind of school which will meet

the requirements. It should be a country school for country children; it must breathe the atmosphere of country life; it must instill a love for country things, and it must teach in terms of the life which the country child understands. The popularity of the system of Consolidated Schools based upon its efficiency is rapidly increasing. It is but 43 years since Massachusetts made the first move to form a Consolidated School. In the United States there are to-day 2,000 of such schools with 57,000 pupils scattered over 33 states. Indiana takes first place in this movement and has 600 Consolidated Schools formed out of 1,600 districts.

At Hillsboro, P.E.I., a Consolidated School has been formed by uniting six districts. In Nova Scotia twenty-two such schools have been established, and four in New Brunswick. When the question was first raised in Manitoba, it was met with a storm of ridicule, but to-day there are 40 such schools there, and the prediction is made that within eight or ten years there will be very few, if any, of the old time rural schools left in that province.

The reports of those qualified to speak of the character of the work done in these schools are most hopeful and encouraging, and the published statistics show a very large increase in the attendance, amounting in some cases to 50 per cent. In a few cases mistakes were made in introducing the new system, but these doubtless will be corrected through enlarged experience.

I have no desire to dwell unnecessarily upon the advantages which Consolidated Schools should afford, but a few of these stand out so prominently that they should be mentioned. These schools, through their graded classification and qualified staffs of teachers, will be enabled to carry the ordinary academic work quite beyond what is now done in rural schools, and to have Fifth Classes in all schools in which the standing of the pupils requires it. They will also be equipped to teach properly those special subjects to which I have already referred, namely: Agriculture, Manual Training and Household Science, which can be taught only very imperfectly in rural schools.

If such provision were made the ordinary country boy could be kept at school from one to two years longer than at present. If this result can be achieved, it should prove of the highest value to him in assisting him to prepare for his work in life.

One of the most serious educational problems that meets us to-day is, what is to be done for the average pupil between the age of 14 and 16 or 17 years? Up to say 14 years of age he has been provided for with those primary subjects which make for general intelligence, but allowing for the few who go forward to High Schools, what is to be done for the many who remain at home after completing the Fourth Form of Public School work. The intervening period between the time in his early teens when he usually leaves the Public School, and the time when he begins to live in his own right, economically, socially and morally, may, I fear, in too many cases be called the waste years of a boy's life, and yet these years in a large majority of cases determine the conditions as to the usefulness and happiness of the future man. As the boy approaches the period of youth he becomes restive and tired of school. Let us not blame him. There is but little now to arouse his ambition in the school. He is beginning to look out upon a broader world, a new world of responsibilities in which he realizes he must soon engage, and he fails to see a direct relation between this material world which surrounds him and the school world in which he has been living. The latter has seemed mainly a world of books to be studied and of words to be learned; the former is a world of realities and of things to be done, and he instinctively turns towards the material world. He wishes to get into the line of preparation for the real activities of life. He longs

to do manly things, and he soon loses interest in school life unless it responds to this new desire growing within him. If then we would retain his interest in school work and kindle anew the ambition which books have failed to sustain, we must recognize the new desires and aspirations of the youth and provide such a course of instruction as will satisfy these.

Another advantage to be gained by Consolidated Schools is that increased attendance will put new life into the schools. It will arouse ambition through competition, and stimulate emulation as the child realizes he is part of a greater whole than he ever was before. The lack of competition in small rural schools is one of the greatest drawbacks to interest and work among both pupils and teachers. The increased attendance of pupils coming from different parts of a large district would do much to improve social intercourse and to reduce the isolation which is one of the most serious drawbacks to contentment and happiness on the farm.

If schools were consolidated, fewer teachers would be required and the difficulty now experienced in procuring certificated teachers would be very much lessened. The best teachers could be secured for these schools and the improved positions offered would undoubtedly attract and retain the services of a much larger number of male teachers than can now be found in rural schools.

The inability of rural schools to retain their teachers is a most serious matter, and one which causes very great loss to schools. Statistics show that the average length of service by teachers in rural schools is only 4 $\frac{4}{5}$ years, while in urban schools the average is about 11 $\frac{4}{5}$ years. It is fair to assume that in Consolidated Schools, not only would the average length of teaching be twice as great as it is now in rural schools, but continuous service in the same school would be much increased. I will not dwell upon the comfort to pupils in being brought to school properly protected and returned to their homes and thus being saved the discomfort and drudgery of walking twice daily in many cases from one to one and a half miles, and even more, often through stormy weather and over bad roads. Such convenience of access to the school would be certain to ensure a greater attendance and increased regularity.

Another matter which should be considered in relation to Consolidated Schools is the present condition of rural schools as to size and cost. The following figures are limited to single rural Public Schools in the organized counties of Ontario. There are 4,174 of such schools and of these 691 have an average attendance of only 10 or under; 1,881 have an average attendance of from 10 to 20; 1,234 have from 20 to 30; 332 have from 30 to 40, and 36 have over 40: That is—combining the first two classes—2,572 or 61 per cent. of the whole number have an average attendance of 20 or under, and only 368, or less than nine per cent., have an average attendance of 30 or more. In making up the annual cost of supporting these 691 schools, I have placed the average salary at \$450, which is \$14 below the average salary for female teachers, and have placed all other disbursements, except for teacher's salary, at \$80 per year, without counting interest on investment for plant. This gives \$530 as cost of maintenance for each of these schools, or a total cost of \$365,700. If we take eight as the average attendance in these 691 schools, there will be a total average attendance of 5,528 at a cost of \$365,700 which will give \$66 as the cost per unit of attendance. Take the 1881 schools of the second-class and placing the average attendance at 15—half way between 10 and 20—and estimating the annual cost of each at \$600, the cost per unit of average attendance will be \$40. If we combine these two classes the cost per unit of average attendance will be \$44. These figures cause certain facts to stand out prominently:

(1) That the rural districts are keeping open an unnecessary number of small schools.

(2) That the employment of so many teachers in these numerous small schools is both a waste of energy and of money.

(3) That the efficiency of the work done in such schools must ever be handicapped by the small attendance.

The conditions favouring increased attendance have not improved recently. During the past ten years the enrolment of pupils in rural schools has fallen off nine per cent., while in urban schools the increase has been nine per cent. This is undoubtedly the result of removing from the farm to the city, and of immigration to the western provinces.

The farm problem is not mainly the task of fertilizing the soil or of improving staple crops; it is not a question of increasing the skill or business efficiency of the farmer or, as he himself thinks, of adding to his store of worldly goods; nor is it a matter of making farm life easier, although this is highly desirable. All these are elements, but they are not the real problem itself. That problem is the startling immigration of the rural population to town and city. This immigration no longer means only the shifting of a few brilliant sons to the city, as formerly. It now implies the uprooting and withdrawal of whole families, whose members too often represent the highest idealism and ambition of the country community.

The problem of keeping the youth of the present generation upon the farm and of preparing them for a country life in its fullest and richest sense, is one of the greatest concern in our national welfare. Fortunately, we are now in the period of a new awakening when the tide of interest begins to ebb from the rush and strife of the city and to turn with contentment and happiness back to the country.

Modern improvements will do much to promote that happiness and contentment. Rural mail delivery bringing daily papers to every door, rural telephones, relieving the isolation of the farm life and adding so much to its convenience, the assistance and comfort afforded by the transmitting of electricity to thousands of farmers' homes, and the improvement of country roads which is now receiving so much public attention, will all combine to make farm life more pleasant and satisfying than it has ever been before. And if, in addition to these advantages, we, through consolidation of schools, furnish facilities to every child for obtaining a much better education than can possibly be obtained now in the average rural school, and give special prominence to the teaching of those subjects which will assist in preparing the child to solve the problems which will meet him in after life, we shall do much to settle the unrest which obtains so generally in the rural districts to-day.

The substitution of Consolidated Schools for the one-teacher rural school would undoubtedly arouse opposition. Radical changes are not readily adopted and transitions are often opposed. Sacrifices would have to be made, for it is a law of our being that achievement of what is worthy involves some sacrifice. What can be obtained by merely holding out our hands is rarely of much value. One may trust the people if he has the right thing for them and can show them clearly that it is the right thing.

The time has come when the whole question of Consolidated Schools should be thoroughly and carefully investigated and the facts, for and against, put before the people. If this is done and time allowed for free discussion, I believe the inherent merits of the question and the good sense of the people will ensure its adoption. In one of the American States a law has been passed prohibiting the opening of any rural school with less than 15 pupils. This is, I think, unwise. The success of the

consolidation scheme must ever depend upon the hearty co-operation of the patrons who support it. It is wiser to convince than to coerce, to draw than to drive. If I appear in this report to have gone somewhat afield, the reason may be briefly stated.

What Is Necessary

I do not think the progress made in rural schools during the past 20 or 30 years has been at all equal to the progress made in urban schools. To improve present conditions three things are necessary:

(1) A better class of teachers, especially of male teachers, possessing development of character, which will enable them to inspire their pupils to make, not only the most of themselves intellectually, but the best of themselves in every sense of the word.

(2) Such a change in the programme of studies for rural schools as will no longer allow the Entrance examination to High Schools to serve as the climax of achievement for all Public School effort, but which will rather aim so to direct the pupil's school work as to assist in preparing him for the industrial life which he will lead.

(3) A Consolidated School system which will furnish the best facilities for giving effect to such a programme and, by offering superior advantages to teachers, will secure and retain the services of those of the highest grade.

If the country desires the best finished product, it must furnish the necessary means to ensure it.

The rural school section should no longer be allowed to serve as an altar upon which to sacrifice the progress of our children. It has an honourable, useful record, but "The old order changeth, yielding place to new." Not to go forward is to fall behind.

I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

J. J. TILLEY.

Toronto, January 28th, 1914.

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